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Mrs Ruth England
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Dear Mrs England

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Shuttleworth College

Following my visit to your school on 29 October 2019, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the monitoring inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions that have been taken to improve the school since the most recent section 5 inspection.

The monitoring inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 and has taken place because the school has received two successive judgements of requires improvement at its previous section 5 inspections.

Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection in order for the school to become good.

The school should take further action to:

- continue to improve the progress of pupils at key stage 4, particularly in the creative subjects
- ensure that the curriculum is ambitious for all pupils and at least matches the depth, breadth and challenge of the national curriculum at key stage 3.

Evidence

During the inspection, I met with you and other senior leaders to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. I also met with a group of subject leaders and some Year 11 pupils. Further meetings were held with two members of the governing body, including the chair of governors and a representative of the local authority. I

also spoke with the headteacher of another school in the local authority who is providing support to the school.

The school improvement plan was evaluated, alongside other documents such as the school's self-evaluation and the minutes of governors' meetings. I also reviewed information about safeguarding, including the school's record of checks undertaken on newly appointed staff. I visited some lessons with senior leaders and spoke with pupils informally around the school. I also observed pupils' behaviour at breaktime and throughout the school day.

Context

Since the previous inspection, there have been a number of changes to staffing. You have restructured the senior leadership team and recently co-opted two middle leaders onto the extended leadership team. A new subject leader for modern foreign languages has been appointed. There have been a number of staffing changes in a range of subject areas, mostly in response to the growing pupil numbers in the school. Staff retention is the highest it has been for many years.

There has been a significant increase in the number of pupils on roll at the school since the previous inspection. The school has welcomed approximately 200 pupils who have joined the school part way through the school year due to the closure of a local school.

Main findings

You, the leadership team and staff across the school have worked tirelessly to bring about substantial improvements to all areas of school life. This is taking time, but the improvements being brought about are sustainable and are making a positive difference to the quality of education pupils receive. The recent increase in pupil numbers has presented both challenges and opportunities for you and the leadership team as you have integrated a high number of pupils into the 'Shuttleworth way'. You have helped these new pupils to settle and respond positively to the school's motto, 'Think big, chase dreams, succeed together'.

Your plans to improve the school show that you know the school well. They also show clearly what leaders and staff need to do to continue to strengthen the school's work. Governors ask challenging questions about the progress you and other leaders are making towards achieving your planned actions. This is contributing to the school's improvement journey.

You have ensured that pupils' rates of progress are improving for all pupils. More pupils than ever are now achieving success in English and mathematics, including at the higher grades. The school is improving, year on year, towards the national average for attainment in these subjects. The attainment and progress of disadvantaged pupils is also improving. An increasing proportion of pupils are being

prepared well for their next steps. The proportion of Year 11 pupils moving on to further education, employment or apprenticeships is now above the national average. This has been achieved through a high-quality careers programme which provides pupils of all ages with bespoke careers guidance. Pupils benefit from many meaningful opportunities to meet with and learn from employers.

Marked improvements over time in teaching and the curriculum in mathematics, English and science mean that pupils now achieve well in these subject areas. The provisional results from summer 2019 show that pupils are now beginning to achieve better in humanities and modern foreign languages than they have in the past. Leaders are aware that more improvements need to take place in the creative subjects, such as technology, art and music. This is to ensure that pupils achieve just as well in these subjects by the end of key stage 4. Clear, detailed action plans are in place to ensure that the curriculum in these subjects meets the needs of pupils and enables them to achieve well. Subject leaders know where there are remaining weaknesses in provision. Support and training are in place to address these.

There is a clear rationale and structure for assessment in place. A rigorous cycle of planning, assessment, moderation and intervention ensures that leaders know how well all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are doing. Ongoing assessment training for teachers is helping them to identify gaps in pupils' knowledge and then use this information effectively to inform future learning. As a result, staff are becoming increasingly skilled at meeting the needs of pupils from their different starting points.

Most subject leaders can explain the key knowledge that pupils need to learn during their time studying their subject. Some leaders are not as far on in terms of curriculum development. Some leaders are in the process of identifying the key knowledge that pupils need and then ensuring that the curriculum is planned in a logical order to ensure that pupils build on prior learning and are well prepared for their next learning. In these subject areas, subject leaders and teachers benefit from the good practice within the school and also work with support from specialist leaders of education (SLEs) from other schools to ensure that improvements are timely and effective.

External support

You have secured a range of support for all levels of leadership within the school. The local authority has worked with the school to strengthen governance so that they now hold leaders firmly and robustly to account. You have received funding from the Department for Education to work with an outstanding school in the local authority to further improve the curriculum and leadership in humanities, science and English. You have commissioned a review of special educational needs support to ensure that pupils with SEND get a good deal at this school. The partnership with the local authority school is proving particularly helpful in supporting you to develop

the quality of senior and middle leadership in the school. Your outward-facing approach and in-depth knowledge of the school's strengths and areas for improvement mean that teachers and leaders are benefiting significantly from their engagement in a wide range of training opportunities.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Lancashire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Helen O'Neill
Her Majesty's Inspector